

QA-309
Observer Building
Centreville
Private

1884, 1903

The Observer Building is notable as one of the earliest surviving buildings on Lawyers Row, and for its prominent role in the post-Civil War history of Centreville. Constructed in 1884 by the Queen Anne's National Bank, this building continued in use until it was gutted by fire in December 1902. This fire burned much of the central business area, destroying buildings on the west side of Commerce Street from Lawyers Row to the north end of the Blue Lantern Inn. Following the fire, the lot and the gutted shell of the bank were sold to William Price, Jr., and a new and larger site was purchased next door (see QA-308). William Price renovated the old bank building, enlarged it, and made it the new office for the Centreville Observer. The building has remained in the Price family ever since, and is now used as a law office.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Queen Anne's National Bank
Observer Building

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Lawyers Row

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Queen Anne's

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER: office**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Robert R. Price, Jr.

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21617

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE:

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Queen Anne's County Courthouse

Liber #: CWC 109

Folio #: 305

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

QA-309

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Observer Building is located on the south side of Lawyer's Row in Centreville, facing the Court House. This three story brick building now serves as a law office for Price and Foster, but has previously served as a newspaper office and a bank.

The earliest part of the building was constructed in 1884 and served as the Queen Anne's National Bank until December 1902, when it was gutted by the devastating fire that swept through this part of Centreville. The lot and the remaining shell of the building were sold after the fire to William Price, Jr., who enlarged and renovated the earlier structure, making it the office for the Centreville Observer. The building still remains in the Price family, but is now used as a law office by Robert Price, Jr.

The original building constructed by the Queen Anne's National Bank was rectangular in plan, two stories high, and three bays wide. The street facade is laid in common bond with very fine machine-made Victorian brick and tight joint work. The side walls and rear were laid in

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1884, rebuilt 1903

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Observer Building is notable as one of the earliest surviving buildings on Lawyers Row, and for its prominent role in the post-Civil War history of Centreville. Constructed in 1884 by the Queen Anne's National Bank, this building continued in use until it was gutted by fire in December 1902. This fire burned much of the central business area, destroying buildings on the west side of Commerce Street from Lawyers Row to the north end of the Blue Lantern Inn. Following the fire, the lot and the gutted shell of the bank were sold to William Price, Jr., and a new and larger site was purchased next door (see QA-308). William Price renovated the old bank building, enlarged it, and made it the new office for the Centreville Observer. The building has remained in the Price family ever since, and is now used as a law office.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

QA-309

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Orlando Ridout V, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Queen Anne's County Historical Society

DATE

7/7/80

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Centreville

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.1 DESCRIPTION

seven-course bond with a more common grade of brick.

The main entrance door was located in the center bay of the street facade, flanked by a single window on either side. A paired 1/1 window is centered on the second floor, flanked by semi-circular arched openings on each side. The arched lintel of the center window as well as the lintels of all three first floor openings were reworked following the fire, and the semi-circular openings were bricked in to form decorative recesses. A rectangular panel centered above the second story window bears the "Observer" logo. Original recessed decorative panels flank this on either side.

Following the 1902 fire, the center door was changed to a window and the west window was enlarged to accommodate a door and transom. The second story arched openings were bricked up and the building was raised from two stories to three, with a pair of 2/2 windows below a decorative bracketed cornice on the third floor.

The fenestration on the east side wall is asymmetrical, consisting of a first floor door at the rear and numerous 2/2 windows on each floor. A two

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.2 DESCRIPTION

story frame addition covers most of the rear of the building; a two story brick office adjoins the west wall.

The interior has been completely renovated for use as professional offices.

BELVEDERE AVE.

CHESTERFIELD AVE. MD. 304

STREET

STREET

LIBERTY

WATER

LAWYERS ROW

BROADWAY

COMMERCE

JOSEPH R. RICHARDSON & FREDA C.V. SMITH CWC 107/170

P. 81

GEORGE E. ICKES, ETAL CWC 93/659

W. HARMAN EATON TSP 62/118 R 83

MARY E. TURNER CWC 120/434 P. 84

ELIZABETH H. COLLINS CWC 57/11 R 85

LESTER C. LEONARD, JR. CWC 56/498 R 87

LESTER C. LEONARD CWC 80/81 R 87

COUNTY JAIL R 70

ALICE JEWELL TSP 25/108 R 80

SYDNEY G. ASHLEY MWM 143/468 P. 89

SYDNEY G. ASHLEY MWM 143/468 P. 71

CARLTON ROE TSP 80/9 R 79

HELEN ROE, ETAL CWC 36/460 R 78

DAVID B. SKINNER CWC 107/478 R 77

E.J. MITCHELL CWC 20/460 R 76

MIRIAM CHAMBERS TSP 27/9 PARCELA

SYDNEY G. ASHLEY CWC 142/485 P. 74

JAMES DEWARD TSP 27/528 R 72

DALE E. AXTELL CWC 140/214 R 48

CENTREVILLE METHODIST CHURCH TSP 47/848 R 42

ELIZABETH TUTTLE CWC 25/611 R 41

WILLIAM B. JUMP CWC 77/598 P. 31

GOODWILL FIRE CO. INC. ASS. JR. 17/280 R 40

GOODWILL FIRE CO. INC. CWC 25/172 R 39

JOHN W. HURT, JR. No DAWYNS MARKET CWC 84/54 P. 38

CENTREVILLE L. STREET LTD. CO. CWC 142/680 R 37

STATE OF MARYLAND (BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS) CWC 132/443 1.62 A P. 34

QA-301 OBSERVER BUILDING

COURT HOUSE P 48

FARMERS NATIONAL BANK CWC 117/24 0.15 A P. 52

BAY PUBLISH CORP CWC 112/37 P. 30

FARMERS NATIONAL BANK CWC 117/22 0.26 A P. 52

J.R. SMITH, JR. TSP 80/436 R 5

M. BERNHARD, JR. CWC 24/27 P 17

FARMERS NATIONAL BANK CWC 117/20 0.20 A P. 31

LEONARD H. HURFF CWC 137/800 R 15

CLIN PERIN JFR 10/508 : OC. DEC 1958 P. 14

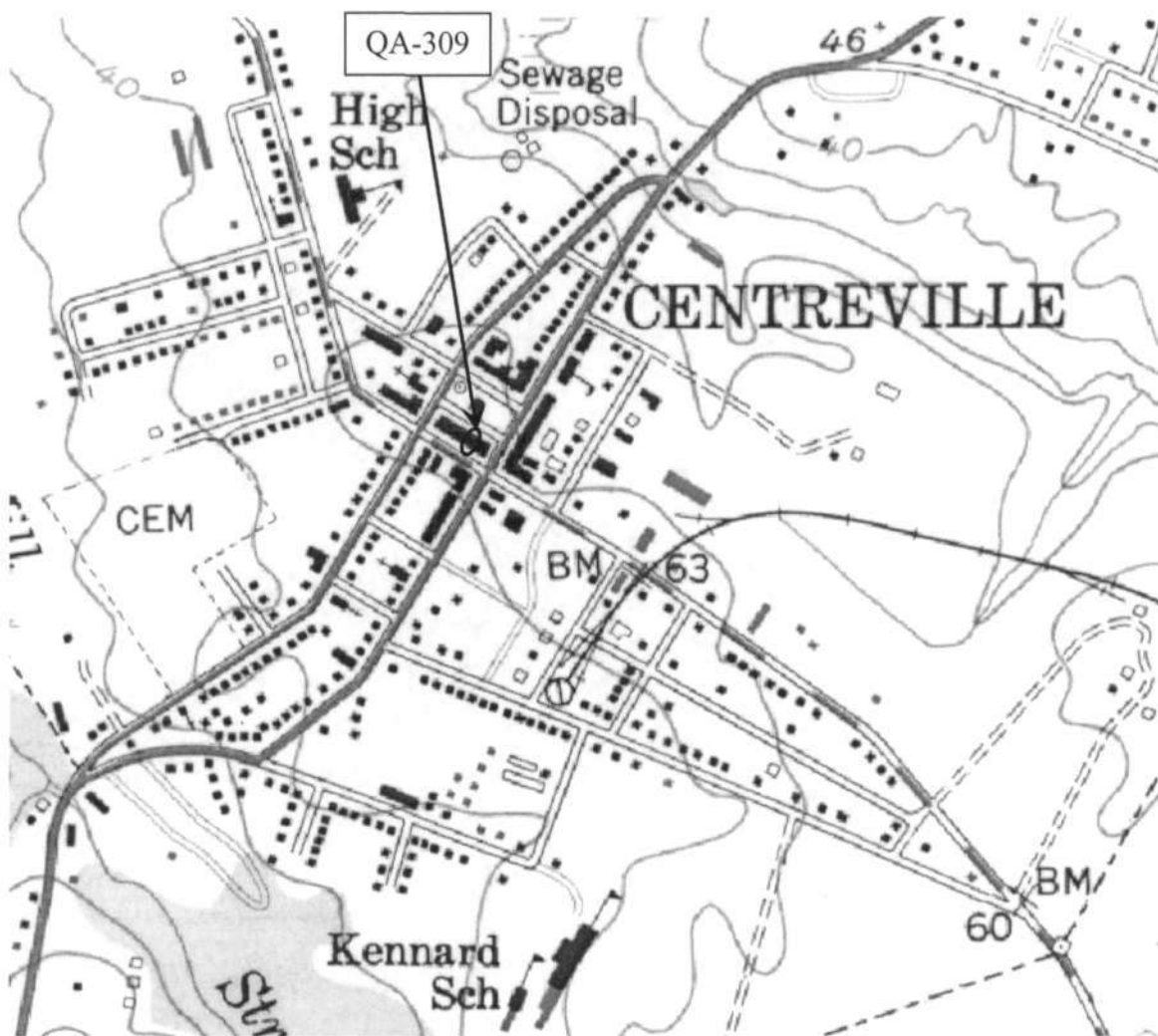
JAMES M. CHANCE TSP 25/48 P 12

DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
TAX MAP DIVISION

REVISED TO JUNE 1 '79

LIBER MWM 150

QA-309
Observer Building
Lawyers Row
Centreville
Centreville Quad.
Queen Anne's Co.



QA-309
Centerville Observer
Building

Mary McCarthy
Spring/Summer 2003
Digital color photo on file at MHT





QA-309

Observer Building
Lawyers Row
Centreville, Maryland
Orlando Ridout V 1980
Front facade from Northeast

4/27/80-4/31/80
5/2/80-6/1/80
R0-10280